

amongst his Senate colleagues. He served a stint running the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

By 1987, he had risen to become chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. That position put him in charge of the inaugural ceremonies at the Capitol for both Presidents George H.W. Bush in 1989 and Bill Clinton in 1993. Kentuckians were proud to see one of their own on the inaugural platform just footsteps away from the new President.

Wendell was chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing where he worked to trim the costs of Government printing and implemented the first ever program for the use of recycled printing paper. That may not be the type of issue that grabs the biggest headlines, but, obviously, official Washington uses a lot of paper. Wendell was ahead of his time in making these environmentally friendly efforts that are commonplace now, and he saved taxpayers millions of dollars.

Wendell could see the absurdity of some of what goes on in Washington and knew just when to break the tension with a little humor. One former colleague has spoken of one of the many times the Senate has continued in session until 3:30 or 4 o'clock in the morning, with debate still going on on the Senate floor. At one of these times, Wendell nudged the Senator next to him and said: You know, the people back home think that we are the ones who won.

Wendell even appeared once on the cable channel MTV on a program called "Rock the Vote" because of his sponsorship of the motor voter law. That MTV appearance made him very popular with his grandchildren. Surely the number of U.S. Senators who have appeared sandwiched in between videos for Whitney Houston and Billy Ray Cyrus is very small.

In 1990, Wendell's colleagues, as my friend the majority leader pointed out, elected him to be No. 2 in their party in the Senate, the Senate whip. He held that slot until his retirement in 1999. Wendell was elected by acclamation and without opposition. That is obviously a position of great responsibility and honor, and it speaks to the respect Wendell commanded from his fellow Senators.

After his election as whip, he said: In Kentucky, we are known for our horses. I plan on being a workhorse and not a show horse.

I think knowing Wendell's work ethic, no one doubted he would give his all to the job.

In March of 1998, Wendell became the longest serving Senator in Kentucky history, breaking the record of the man he had seen giving a speech more than 50 years earlier, Alben Barkley. That is just another accomplishment in a long list that he has amassed over his extraordinarily successful tenure in both State and Federal Government.

Wendell Ford served in this body for 8,772 days, a record that stood for near-

ly 11 years until January 10, this past Saturday. He never lost an election for public office. Kentucky sent him to the U.S. Senate four times, and he was the first statewide candidate to carry all 120 counties.

How does a country boy from Yellow Creek achieve such success at the highest levels of American politics? I think because no matter where he ended up, Wendell Ford never forgot from where he started from. Even in his final months in the Senate, he still got goose bumps every time he looked up at the Capitol dome on his way to work. He remained the same man, partial to a cigarette and a down-home tale.

When his duties didn't require him to be in Washington, he would return home to Kentucky, as he did most weekends throughout his Senate career. A 3-day weekend was a perfect chance to go to the house he and his family owned by Rough River Lake and do some reading and fishing. He once said his idea of a vacation was "not shaving and not wearing a suit."

Wendell Ford never forgot the truly important things in his life—his wife Jean, their children and grandchildren, and the simple pleasures of his native Kentucky.

Many of my colleagues will remember his trademark greeting when he walked into a room. He would say: How are all you lucky people doing? Sometimes that would be shortened to simply: Hey, Lucky!

But Wendell never lost sight that he was truly the lucky one for receiving the trust of the people of Kentucky many times over. He would be the first to tell you that, and Kentucky and our Nation are lucky as well for having had his many years of service.

Over the next 6 years, as I work my hardest to better the lives of everyone in Kentucky and the country, I am going to remember the lessons learned from Wendell Ford's long career. I will remember how his life is a testament to the success anybody in America can attain, even a country boy from Yellow Creek. I will remember what an honor it is to continue in the tradition of Wendell Ford and so many other fine public servants who have come from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Their service will continue to remind me every day that with energy, determination, and principle, being the Senator from Kentucky is the best job I could ever hope to have.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business for 1 hour.

The Senator from Tennessee.

TRIBUTE TO MITCH MCCONNELL

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, those who have been listening and watching for the last few minutes got one good lesson on why Senator MCCONNELL has been here for over 24 years. This is a day to honor him, but he spent virtually all of his time honoring someone else.

It is a remarkable and rare event that Senator MCCONNELL could serve longer than Wendell Ford, the man he just honored, longer than Henry Clay, longer than John Sherman Cooper, and longer than Alben Barkley. But all of us know longevity by itself is not a transcending virtue, but it is an indication of one of the most transcending virtues; and that is, the people of Kentucky for the last 24 years have seen something special in MITCH MCCONNELL, something that is good for Kentucky, in the opinion of Kentuckians, and something that is good for our country. I have seen that, too, but for a longer period of time than 24 years; 40 years, to be exact.

I remember when MITCH MCCONNELL came to Washington, not the time he was an intern but as the legislative director for Senator Marlow Cook. Legislative director is a little bit of a puffed-up title for the job at that time, because in the office of Senator Baker of Tennessee, where I had been the year before, there was only one legislative assistant. So we were legislative directors of usually one or two people at a time, which may seem pretty hard for staff members in this Senate to understand.

I remember that by 1969, I moved over to work for Bryce Harlow in the Nixon White House. Howard Baker, who had been a good friend of Marlow Cook, the new Senator from Kentucky, came to me and said: Marlow Cook has a bright young man working for him; you ought to get to know him.

So I did, 40 years ago.

We both stayed in Washington for a while. We both went home after a few years, and in 1978, 30 years ago, we both were elected to an executive position in our home States—I as Governor of Tennessee, and MITCH MCCONNELL as the county executive of Jefferson County, which is Louisville, the big county there.

Then, in 1984, as the record shows and we all know, he was elected to the U.S. Senate, the only Republican in the country that year, I believe, who was able to defeat an incumbent Democrat.

When Senator MCCONNELL and I were young staff assistants in the Senate, the leaders of the Senate were Senators Dirksen and Mansfield. There have been many great leaders of the Senate since that period of time. All of those leaders who were good—and most of them were—knew this body, knew the Senate. They knew human nature instinctively, but they had one other quality, and this is another quality